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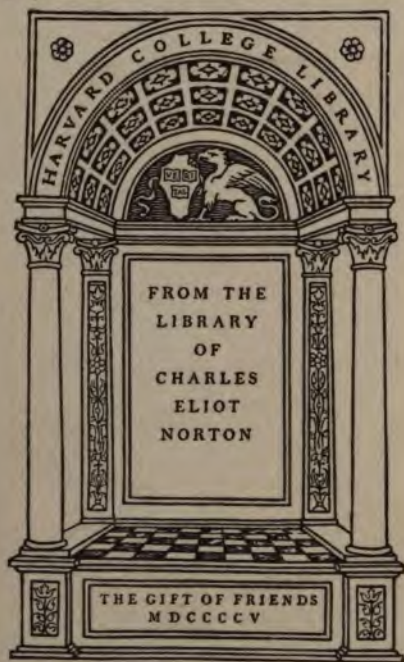
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THE
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FOR
V I S I T O R S
TO
STRATFORD-UPON-AVON.

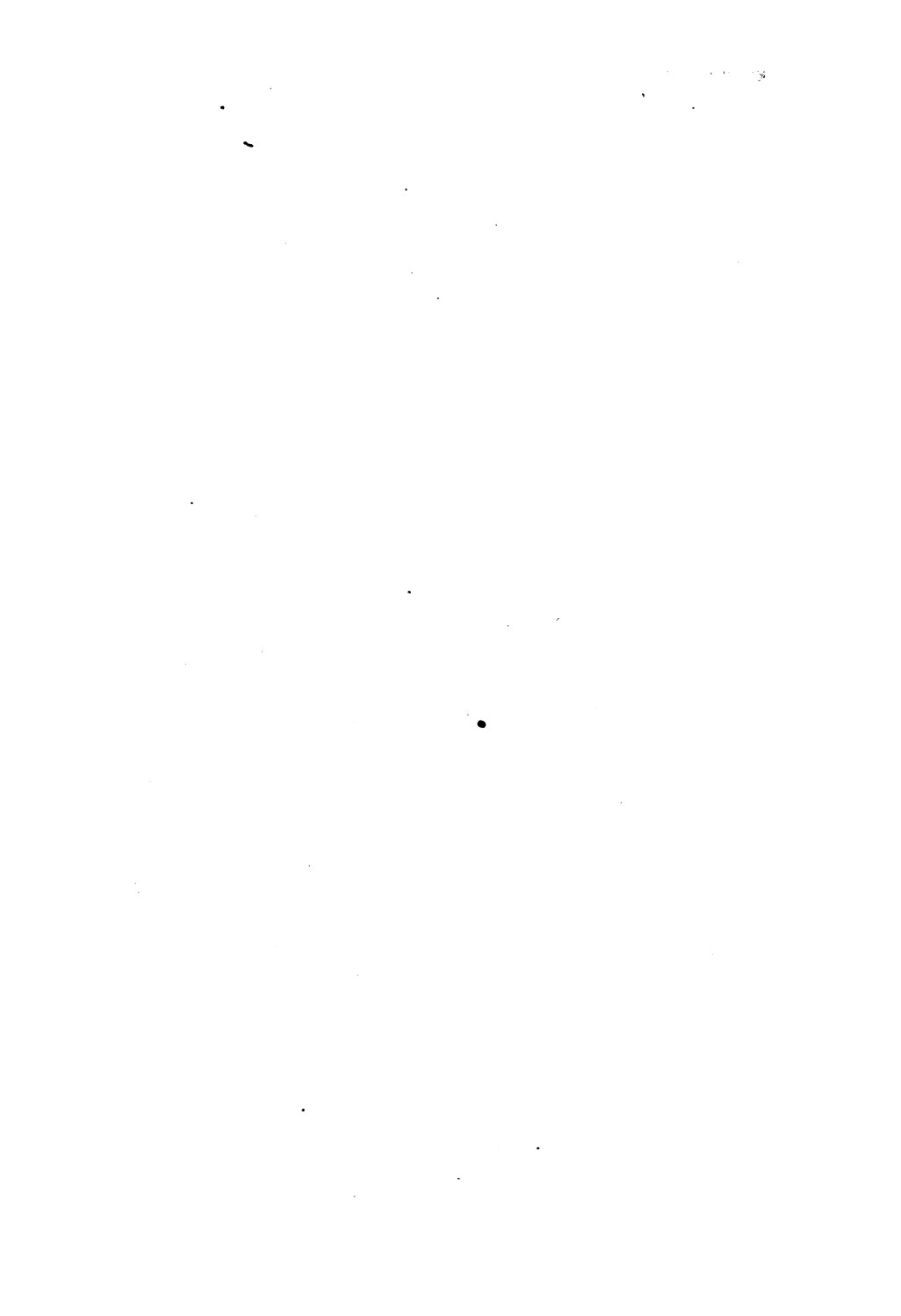


Stratford-upon-Avon :

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY F. & E. WARD.

1851.

Price 1s.









SHAKESPEARE'S BIRTH PLACE

HAND BOOK FOR VISITORS

To

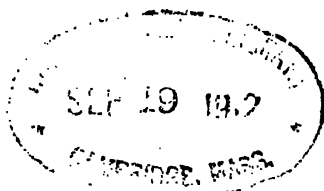
STRATFORD-UPON-AVON.

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY F. & E. WARD, HIGH-STREET.

1851.

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From library of
Prof. Charles Chitt Norton

HAND BOOK FOR VISITORS.

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON.

WHEN many villages, and almost all provincial towns have Guides, to point out to travellers whatever may be remarkable in them and in the surrounding country, little or no apology can be necessary for offering to the Public A GUIDE TO STRATFORD-UPON-AVON, which may direct the attention of strangers to what is particularly worthy of their notice—the house where our immortal Shakspeare was an

“ Infant in his nurse's arms.”

the school in which it is presumed he received his education—the scenes of his youthful imprudences, and of his youthful meditations—the spots familiar to him in early and in mature life—the site of the house where, with an income suited to his wants and wishes, he passed his last years—and the church where all his mortal part was consigned to the grave.

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Stratford-upon-Avon is situated on the banks of the Avon, eight miles west from Warwick, and ten from Leamington, and is in the direct road to Cheltenham, distant thirty-four miles. It lies also in the high road from London, distant ninety-four miles, (through Oxford, to Birmingham, Shrewsbury, and Holyhead,) and is approached by a stone bridge built over the river Avon by Sir Hugh Clopton, Knight, Lord Mayor of London, in the reign of Henry VII. The town may be traced to as remote a period as three hundred years before the invasion of William the Conqueror, at which time there was a monastery, supposed to have been founded by the Saxons, which was afterwards dissolved; but the town continued in the possession of the Bishops of Worcester till 1542, when it was made over to the Duke of Northumberland, in exchange for lands in Worcestershire. The Duke being afterwards attainted, the Manor of Stratford fell to the Crown, and Charles II. gave it to Charles, Earl of Dorset. The present Lady of the Manor is the Countess Amherst.

The town received its first regular Charter of Incorporation from Edward VI., which, reciting and confirming former grants of privileges to "The Bailiff and Burgesses of Stratford-upon-Avon," was extended by James I., and subsequently by Charles II., in the 16th and 26th years of his reign. Under this last Charter the government was vested in a Mayor, twelve Aldermen, and twelve Burgesses, the Mayor being chosen annually from the whole body. Under the provisions

of the late Municipal Act, the Borough is now governed by a Council consisting of a Mayor, (elected on the first of November in every year, out of the Aldermen or Councillors,) four Aldermen, (chosen by the Councillors from their own body or from the persons qualified to be Councillors,) and twelve Councillors elected by the Burgesses at large. Two of the Aldermen go out of office every third year, and one-third of the Councillors go out of office annually, but each person so going out is capable of being re-elected. The Officers of the Corporation consist of a High Steward, (the Earl of Delawarr,) a Town Clerk, a Chamberlain, two Sergeants at Mace, and a Beadle.

Stratford possesses many advantages for trade and commerce, of which its inhabitants are so diligently availing themselves as to afford every prospect of its becoming one of the most considerable towns in the County of Warwick, not possessed of manufactures. The river Avon, navigable to the bridge, is the means of keeping up a continual intercourse between Stratford and the important cities of Gloucester and Bristol. It is connected, by a canal opened in 1817, with Birmingham, and the great mining districts of Staffordshire, Worcestershire, and Shropshire. Coaches pass through it daily in every direction. The beauty and salubrity of the neighbourhood attract new residents every year. The town is well lighted with gas, and shops of every kind offer a supply to the inhabitants of all the conveniences and comforts of life. The excellence of the Warwickshire roads is well known ; and

two lines of railroad are in progress, which will put it in easy communication with the metropolis and important districts of the north. There are also several comfortable hotels, the accommodations of which have been the theme of praise to many distinguished travellers.

The town also contains a Theatre, fitted up with much neatness and taste, and which has occasionally been honoured by the exertions of some of our most distinguished actors. A Public Infirmary, for supplying the sick with advice and medicines, was established in 1823, and is liberally supported; its objects being materially assisted by a District Visiting Society, the members of which (ladies) visit the poor and provide them with the comforts needful in sickness.

The inhabitants also enjoy the advantages of an excellent Free School for their children; and, besides the parish Church, and the Chapel of the Holy Trinity, there are several places of worship for different denominations of dissenters.

Stratford consists of eighteen principal streets, generally well paved and remarkably clean. The market, which was formerly on Thursday, is now, by Charter granted in the 59th of Geo. III., held on Friday, and is very considerable for wheat and other grain. Several well-attended fairs are held; and also two statutes for the hiring of servants.



SHAKSPEARE'S HOUSE, FROM AN OLD PRINT.

THE BIRTH-PLACE OF SHAKSPEARE.

Unvarying tradition has pointed out the house on the north side of Henley-street, as that in which John Shakspeare resided when his illustrious son was born. Though it is now of unassuming appearance, and rather of mean character, it was evidently, in the sixteenth century, a dwelling quite adequate to the domestic accommodation of a respectable family.—See the Illustration, page 8. The instrument is still preserved in the archives of the Borough, whereby John Shakspeare became the actual proprietor of these premises, in 1574, by purchase of Edward and Emma Hall, for the sum of £40. They then consisted of two dwellings, with gardens, &c. He resided here till his death, and left the whole to William, his eldest son, who bequeathed them to his children, reserving a life interest to his sister Joan in the particular residence of their father, wherein she dwelt till her death in 1646; and upon the demise of Lady Barnard, our immortal Poet's grand-daughter, in 1699, it reverted to the issue of the said Joan, by her husband William Hart, in the possession of whose descendants it continued till 1806, when the late William Shakspeare Hart, seventh in descent from the "Pride of Stratford," sold the houses, &c. to Mr. Thomas Court, from whose family they have now been sold to the united committees of Stratford and London, for the benefit of the nation at large. Its original features have been somewhat altered since

it was purchased by the elder Shakspeare, and the two messuages have become three tenements, one of which was long a public house, known by the sign of the Swan and Maiden's Head, and latterly faced with brick.

On catching sight of the low but honoured roof from whence came forth the man whose writings were for all time, the general impression certainly is that the dwelling is but an humble one. It must, however, be remembered that the house fell into hands continually becoming poorer, and thus its dimensions were curtailed. Besides this, the property was purchased by Shakspeare's father, and at this time but few houses in country towns exceeded one story in height. In fact, as may be seen from humbler ancient dwellings yet remaining in Stratford, there was usually only an apartment with attic windows above the ground floor. Loftier houses only became general in the sixteenth century. Yet this house, lowly as it seems, is constructed with a ponderosity that will yet resist time's efforts for centuries.

This honoured house was naturally an object of primary attraction during the Jubilee, instituted in 1769, by Garrick, in honour of his beloved Shakspeare. He displayed a well-painted transparency, from a design by Sir Joshua Reynolds, before the chamber of the Poet's birth, representing the sun breaking in splendour through obscuring clouds, with this motto—

“ Thus dying clouds contend with glowing light.”

THE LIFE OF SHAKSPEARE.

William Shakspeare was born on St. George's day, April 23, 1564, at Stratford-upon-Avon, and baptized, according to the register at the church, on the 26th. His father, John Shakspeare, was a man of considerable wealth and importance. He served the office of high bailiff and justice of the peace for the Borough in 1569. He married Mary, the youngest daughter of Robert Arden, Esq., of Wilmecote, in the county of Warwick, by whom he had eight children. Of these our illustrious poet was the eldest, and he was probably educated at the free school at Stratford. The full extent of his education has long been matter of controversy. At the age of eighteen (in 1582) he married Anne Hathaway, aged twenty-six, from Shottery, a hamlet to Stratford. His marriage license-bond was lately discovered in the archives of the Consistorial Court of Worcester, but no entry or register of the marriage itself has yet been found. No particulars of his domestic life are known on which to found or by which to refute the common opinion that this union was not a happy one.

Shakspeare's early companions appear to have been of a loose and idle character. Tradition reports that they were detected in robbing the park of Sir Thomas Lucy, of Charlecote, near Stratford, and that Shakspeare, conceiving himself treated with too great severity, affixed, in revenge, a scurrilous ballad on the park

gate of Sir Thomas. It is believed that this aggravation of injury by insult called forth threats of prosecution, which compelled Shakspeare to leave his home and take shelter in the metropolis, about the year 1586 or 1587. When he arrived there he was about twenty-two years of age, and is said at this time to have made his first acquaintance with the theatre, and to have been obliged to accept the offer of prompter's attendant, who is appointed to give the performers notice when the business of the play requires their presence on the stage. In this humble situation he soon gave evident signs of those talents which made him

"Th' applause, delight and wonder of our stage."

At one time he trod the boards himself as a performer, but in this occupation never attained to any great celebrity, nor is it certainly known what parts he enacted: his success, however, it is presumed was not sufficient to tempt him long to offer himself to public notice as an actor. The precise time when he first appeared as a dramatic writer is not easily ascertained. Malone has fixed upon "Love's Labour's Lost" as the first acknowledged play of Shakspeare, and states it to have been written in 1591, when he was twenty-seven years old. His "Romeo and Juliet," and "Richard the Second" and "Third" were printed in 1597, and of consequence were written some time previous. His plays were not only approved by the people but also by persons of the highest rank: and our bard, more fortunate than many candidates for fame, was, as he

merited to be, a favourite with the great and powerful. It is known that he was honoured by the patronage of Queen Elizabeth, (at whose particular desire he wrote the comedy of "The Merry Wives of Windsor")—of King James, (who wrote a very gracious letter to him with his own hand, which was for a long time in the possession of Sir William Davenant, but is now lost,)—and of the Earl of Southampton, to whom he dedicated some of his poems. To this may be added, that his uncommon merit as a dramatic writer, his candour and good nature as a companion, obtained for him the admiration and acquaintance of all those who were capable of appreciating such qualities.

During his dramatic career, he acquired a property in the theatre, which he must have disposed of when he retired, as he does not mention it in his will. The latter part of his life was passed in ease, retirement, and the conversation of his friends. The property he had accumulated was considerable, as Gildon, who wrote about 1694, states it to have been £300 per annum, a sum which at that time would be more than equal to £1,000 in the present day.

Some years before his death he retired to a house in Stratford, which will not be passed over unnoticed. During his residence here, he enjoyed the friendship and acquaintance of the gentlemen in the neighbourhood; and here he is thought to have written his play of "Twelfth Night," which closed his dramatic labours, in 1614. According to other writers, "The Winter's Tale" and "The Tempest" were his latest productions,

and both written before his retirement to Stratford, which only took place about three years before his death.* As, however, Shakspeare had for several years been in the habit of paying an annual visit to Stratford, there can be little reason to doubt that some of his immortal plays were composed in his house at New Place:

He died on his birth-day, Tuesday April 23, 1616, having exactly completed his fifty-second year; and was buried on the north side of the chancel of Stratford church. There is no account of the malady which, at no advanced age, put an end to the life and labours of this unrivalled genius; and the only mention we have of his person is from Aubrey, who lived between 1626 and 1700, and wrote a curious account of our poet and many other writers, in which he says of Shakspeare, that "he was a handsome well-shaped man," and adds that he was "verie good companie, and of a verie ready and pleasant, and smooth witt."

His family consisted of two daughters and one son, all born before he quitted Stratford for London, Susanna, the eldest, was baptized at Stratford 26th of May 1583, and was married 5th of June 1607 to Dr. John Hall, a physician, who died 25th Nov. 1635, aged 60 years. Mrs. Hall died 11th July 1649, aged 66 years. They left only one child (Elizabeth) born 1607—8, and married, first, 22nd April 1626, to

* The reader is referred to a Chronological List of Shakspeare's Plays, appended to an admirable Life of Shakspeare by the Rev. Alexander Dyce, prefixed to the Aldine edition of Shakspeare's Poems.

Thomas Nashe, Esq., son of Anthony Nashe, Esq., of Welcombe, who died 4th April 1647; and again, 5th June 1649, to John Barnard, Esq., afterwards Sir John Barnard, of Abington, Northamptonshire, but died 17th February 1669—70, without issue by either husband. Shakspeare's other children, Hamnet and Judith, were twins, baptised 2nd February 1584—5. Hamnet died 11th August 1596, in the 12th year of his age. Judith was married 10th February 1615—16, to Mr. Thomas Quiney, and was buried 9th February 1661—2, aged 77 years. By Mr. Quiney she had three sons, Shakspeare, Richard, and Thomas, who all died unmarried. Thus in so short a time as the second generation did our poet's family, in the direct line, become extinct.

THE TOWN HALL.

PROCEEDING in a southerly direction from the birth-place, down High Street, the attention is attracted by the Town Hall, a handsome stone building, erected in 1768 by the Corporation and Inhabitants of Stratford, assisted by the Nobility and Gentry of the neighbourhood. On the west front are the arms of the Corporation; and in a niche at the north end is placed a statue of Shakspeare, presented by Garrick. The Poet is represented in the same attitude as on his monument in Westminster Abbey, resting on

some volumes placed on a pedestal which is ornamented with the busts of Henry V., Richard III., and Queen Elizabeth. He points to a scroll, on which are the following lines selected from his own beautiful play of the "Midsummer Night's Dream—

"The Poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,
And, as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the Poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation, and a name."

On the upper border of the plinth are these words:—

"Take him for all in all
We shall not look upon his like again."

On the plinth is the following inscription:—

"The corporation and inhabitants of Stratford, assisted by the munificent contributions of the nobility and gentlemen of the neighbourhood, rebuilt this edifice in the year 1768. The statue of Shakspeare was given by David Garrick, Esq.

The large room within is sixty feet long and thirty wide. It is enriched by four large paintings. At the north end is a whole-length portrait of Shakspeare, painted by Wilson, at the expense of the Corporation, in 1769. There is also a full-length portrait of the Duke of Dorset, father of the late Duke, who was Lord of the Manor and High Steward of the Borough

at the time of the Jubilee in 1769, copied from an original at Knowle, in Kent, and presented by his Duchess.—And in a part of the room to correspond with this is a portrait of Queen Anne.* At the south end is a whole-length painting, by Gainsborough, of David Garrick, Esq., presented by him, from his collection at Hampton, to the Corporation.

It was in this room that Garrick presided at a public breakfast, at the Jubilee; on which occasion also a ball took place in the same apartment, at which Mrs. Garrick's graceful dancing charmed all spectators.

The Pavilion in which Garrick recited the Ode was erected on the bank of the river, on a spot now covered with wharfs.

NEW PLACE.

A SHORT distance from the Town Hall, and in the same street, close to the beautiful Chapel of the Holy Trinity, a dead wall points out the spot where the house stood in which Shakspeare passed the latter part of his life; at the back of which stood the celebrated Mulberry Tree. This mansion was built in the time of Henry VII., by Sir Hugh Clopton, Knight; and was devised by him, under the name of

* This painting has no reference to the town farther than being formerly in the collection at the College. It was purchased at the sale which took place there a short time prior to the building being taken down.

the *Great House*, to his great nephew, William Clopton, Esq., who died in 1521. In 1563 it was sold by the Cloptons to W. Bott, who, before 1570, sold it to William Underhill, Esq.; from the Underhill family it was purchased, in 1597, by Shakspeare, who repaired it, and gave it the appellation of *New Place*, which name it afterwards retained. Shakspeare's age, at the time of making this purchase, was about thirty-two; so that he had realised property at an early period, considering his unpromising outset. He is said to have repaired and improved it. Of its furniture in his time, it would seem that not a single relic is known to remain. At Shakspeare's death the house came to his daughter, Mrs. Hall, for her life. It was then probably inhabited by Dr. and Mrs. Hall. Dr. Hall, who was an eminent and learned physician, died in 1635, *Æt.* 60. Mrs. Hall (Susanna, Shakspeare's eldest-born and beloved daughter) died in 1649, *Æt.* 66; leaving *New Place* to her daughter and only child Elizabeth, then Mrs. Nashe, afterwards Lady Barnard. After her death these premises were sold to Sir Edward Walker, Knight, Garter King at Arms, who left them to his daughter's husband, Sir John Clopton, Knight, of Clopton in this parish. Sir John gave *New Place*, by deed, to his younger son Sir H. Clopton, Knight, a Barrister at Law, and Herald at Arms. He repaired and new fronted the house, and bequeathed it to his son-in-law, Henry Talbot, Esq., by whom it was sold in 1753, to the Rev. F. Gastrell, vicar of Frodsham, in Cheshire;

who, if we may judge from his actions, felt no pride or pleasure in possessing this enviable property. The Mulberry Tree became first the object of his dislike because it subjected him to answer the frequent importunities of strangers whose zeal prompted them to visit it: In an evil hour he ordered the tree, then at its full growth, to be cut down. This act took place in 1756. The greater part of the wood was purchased by Mr. Thomas Sharp, watchmaker, of Stratford; who, having a better knowledge of its value, turned it much to his advantage by converting it into small boxes, goblets, &c. The house was not suffered to stand long after this; for Mr. Gastrell being compelled to pay the assessments towards the maintenance of the poor, (some of which he expected to escape, residing part of the year at Lichfield, though his servants occupied this house in his absence), declared it should never be assessed again; accordingly, in 1759, New Place was taken down, and the materials disposed of.

To the visitor, no spot of ground is more interesting than the site of this house, and the garden behind it. The exterior of the chapel, opposite to Shakspeare's garden wall, has undergone no subsequent change since the eye of the Poet dwelt upon it. Several of the houses in the street, on both sides, although new fronted, are as old as New Place; and were inhabited by the *neighbours* of Shakspeare. Julius Shaw, one of the witnesses to his will, is said to have lived in a house belonging to the Corporation, three doors from

New Place. The lease to Shaw is amongst the Muni-ments of the Corporation.

It may be mentioned that whilst New Place was inhabited by Mr. and Mrs. Nashe (Shakspeare's grand-daughter), in 1643, Queen Henrietta Maria held her court there for about three weeks.

THE CHAPEL.

A CHAPEL was first erected here by permission of Godfrey Giffard, then Bishop of Worcester, in 1269. King Henry IV., by letters patent, 8th of June, 1403, gave permission to some members of this society to continue to themselves and the other members, the messuages, rents, &c., and at their discretion to form a new fraternity of themselves, and other of their friends, to the honour of the Holy Cross and St. John the Baptist, and to provide two priests to perform divine service within their Chapel. This patent was confirmed 15th June, 1429, and in this state it appears to have continued till the 26th of Henry VIII., 1535, at which period there were four priests belonging to the society, and a clerk who was schoolmaster at £10 per annum. By the survey made 37th Henry VIII., their lands, tenements, &c., were valued at £50 per annum. Henry IV. was accounted the founder of the Society, and one of the priests, teacher of the grammar school, performed divine service in the

Chapel for the convenience of those who were too infirm to attend the Church.

Edward VI., a short time before his death, granted the Chapel, Guild Hall, and Alms Houses, as well as the great tithes, to the members of the Corporation, and enjoined them, by charter, to apply the rents and profits to certain uses therein specified, such as paying a stipend to the master of the Grammar School, supporting the people in the Alms Houses, &c.

Towards the latter end of the reign of Henry VII., Sir Hugh Clopton, a liberal benefactor to this town, took down the Chapel (except the Chancel), and rebuilt it at his sole expense. It is dedicated to the Holy Trinity. Against the east wall of the Nave, where it adjoins to the Chancel, is a monument erected to his memory, recording in terms of high commendation his "pious works," and liberal benefactions not only to "this place of his nativity," where he gave £100 to poor housekeepers, and "100 marks to twenty good maidens of good name and fame, to be paid at their marriages," but also to many other places. "He built the great stone bridge over the Avon."

In the tower are two bells and a clock; the latter was the gift of Sir John Clopton, Knight.

This Chapel is open for prayers on Wednesday and Friday in every week, and also on the festivals, and days appointed to be kept holy, which occur in the course of the week. It has lately been new pewed, and a gallery has been erected in it, at the expense of the Corporation, and divine service is performed

there twice every Sunday; the remuneration to the clergyman being guaranteed by the Town Council from the letting of the pews.

THE FREE GRAMMAR SCHOOL,

In which there can be little doubt that Shakspeare was educated, is the next building to the Chapel, over the ancient Guild Hall, the first part of a long range of ancient houses, the rest of which are inhabited by aged alms-people. The School was founded in the reign of Henry VI., by the Rev. — Jolepe, M. A., and a revenue given by him to the Guild for the support of this establishment. This endowment (together with those of the Guild) was seized by Henry VIII., and vested in the crown; but Edward VI., who may justly be termed the second founder of the School, about a fortnight before his death, granted a charter of incorporation to the inhabitants of the Borough, and restored to them the houses and lands taken by his father from the ancient Guild, provided, by a clause in the charter, that the school should be for ever kept up, with the title of "The King's New School."

There is a circumstance connected with the Guild-hall below, which, as possibly tinging the thoughts of the bard's early youth, it is necessary to mention. It was usual in Queen Elizabeth's time, when "players

of enterludes" came to any town, first to attend on the mayor, inform him what "nobleman's servants" they were, and so get license for their public playing, the mayor, aldermen and council of the city appointing the first play, attending upon it, and paying the actors out of the corporation purse, the audience on that occasion being admitted gratis. The place of performance in Stratford was this Guildhall; and Mr. Halliwell, in his "Life of Shakspeare," says, that when the poet was a boy, "the bailiff and aldermen of Stratford encouraged the exhibition of dramatic performances in their ancient town. The accounts of the chamberlains contain several notices of such performances; but there were no doubt many others not mentioned in these documents." It appears, too, that Shakspeare's father was even then an especial patron of the players. The first companies who exhibited their plays in the hall, according to the corporation records, were so favoured when John John Shakspeare was bailiff of Stratford in 1569; and "the Quene's players" received for their services on that occasion the sum of nine pounds. The Earl of Worcester's "players" were at Stratford the same year. Will Shakspeare was then five years of age; and we can easily *imagine* that the embryo dramatist might have been taken by his father to see the performance. Mr. Halliwell says, that he was "in all likelihood a spectator of the performances." In 1573, Lord Leicester's players visited the town, and in 1576, when Shakspeare was twelve years of age, two com-

panies are mentioned, those of the Earls of Warwick and Worcester, and from thence to 1587 players seem constantly to have visited Stratford.

It is, however, certain that the Queen's players were in Stratford in 1587, and two years later Shakespeare was himself a humble member of the company. Here his wit, talents, and ready pen soon made him conspicuous amongst them; and that he was fit to reform and dignify the drama, an extract from his own lecture on the subject in "Hamlet" fully shows :—

"Let your discretion be your tutor, suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature; for anything so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first, and now, was, and is, to hold, as 't were, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now this, overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve;—the censure of which one, must in your allowance, o'erweigh a whole theatre of others."

Such advice as this with reference to its peculiar subject, is indeed "for all times," and as judicious now as when it was first delivered.

THE CHURCH.

Many pleasing and solemn associations present themselves to the numerous visitors to this spacious and venerable structure, so justly to be admired both for its own intrinsic beauty, and as it contains the sacred dust of the immortal Shakspeare.

It stands on the margin of the river Avon. The approach, through a long avenue of lime trees, the boughs of which are so interwoven as to produce a striking colonnade, is peculiarly sedate and pleasing. The church is dedicated to the Holy Trinity. The exact time when it was erected is not recorded, though from the mixture of the Saxon and Norman architecture it may fairly be conjectured to be as early as the eleventh or twelfth century, and the various parts of the church were evidently built at different periods.

On entering, it is immediately apparent the hand of discriminating taste has been at work, for its whole interior, and the chancel also, has been recently carefully restored, and the carved timber roofs renewed. That of the chancel is exceedingly good, supported by angel figures, and adorned with the emblazoned arms of the various benefactors who subscribed to the work. In the nave, whatever was ugly and inappropriate has been removed, open seats substituted, and a handsome and uniform reading desk and pulpit of carved stone set up.

These reparations, which at a very considerable expense have been accomplished under the care of an energetic committee, merit the warm approbation of the spectator. The undertaking originated in a suggestion made by Dr. Conolly, at a meeting of the Shakspearean Club, in 1834, and the remains of the Great Bard of Nature now repose in a "solemn temple" that none can tread without awful and exciting sensations, free from that disgust and vexation attendant upon the view of a neglected and dingy edifice.

At the east end of the north aisle was a chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary. The altar has an ascent of three steps, which is all that can now be discovered, the chapel being wholly occupied by monuments of the Clopton family, who derive their surname from the manor and mansion house of Clopton, in this parish. The most ancient of these monuments is an altar tomb, under a pointed arch, on the south side, raised about four feet and a half from the ground, constructed of carved free stone, with many panels originally filled with shields, but now torn away. On the top is a large marble slab, without either effigy or inscription, consequently it is difficult to determine for whom it was erected, though there is reason to believe it is a cenotaph for Sir Hugh Clopton, and built in his life-time. The descendants of this family, known by so many benefactions to Stratford, are now extinct; and it should never be forgotten that the inhabitants owe it to their memory to preserve the monuments with the utmost care.

Against the same side of the chapel is an elegant monument to the memory of George Carew, Earl of Totness and Baron Clopton, and Joyce his Countess. Under an highly-ornamented arch, supported by Corinthian pillars, lie the effigies of the earl, in armour, and his countess, eldest daughter of William Clopton, Esq. On a large escutcheon, over the arch, are the arms. There are two inscriptions on this monument, one to Sir Thomas Stafford, who desired to be buried near his intimate friends, the Earl and Countess of Totness; and the other to the earl and his countess. He died 27th March 1629, in the 74th year of his age. She died 14th of February 1656, aged 78.

A little northward, against the same wall, is a monument to the memory of Sir Edward Walker, Knight, Garter King at Arms, Secretary of War to King Charles I., and Clerk of the Privy Council to King Charles II. He died 20th February 1676, aged 65.

On the north side of the chapel is another raised tomb, on which are two raised figures of white marble, William Clopton, Esq., and Anne his wife, parents of the Countess of Totness. He is represented in armour, his hand reclining on his helmet, his sword and gauntlets lying by his side, and a lion at his feet. Over this tomb are several small figures of their children, with their names. He died 18th April 1592, and she 17th September 1596.

Against the north wall is a monument to the memory of Sir John Clopton, who married Barbara, daughter of the above-named Sir Edward Walker. She died 10th December 1692, aged 47, and he on the 18th of April 1719, aged 80.

The Chancel, a fine portion of the fabric, was erected late in the fifteenth century, by Dr. Thomas Balshall.

The monuments and inscriptions in the Chancel are numerous, many of which will be inspected with interest; but the attention is chiefly excited by the spot sacred to the ashes of Shakspeare. All that is earthly of this incomparable writer is on the north side of the chancel, beneath a stone on which is this inscription:

GOOD FREND FOR JESVS SAKE FORBEARE,

TO DIGG THE DVST ENCLOSED HEARE:

BLESTE BE ^EY MAN ^TY SPARES THES STONES,

AND CVRST BE HE ^TY MOVES MY BONES.

About five feet from the floor, on the north wall, is a monument, raised by the grateful tenderness of those who did not venture to apprehend that the works of such a man must embalm his memory through every succeeding age. Inarched between two Corinthian columns of black marble, with gilded bases and capitals, is here placed the half-length effigy of Shakspeare, a cushion before him, a pen in the right hand, and the left resting on a scroll. Above the entablature are his armorial bearings,* (the tilting spear, point upwards, and the falcon supporting a spear for the crest.) Over the arms, at the pinnacle of the monument, is a death's head; and, on each side, is the figure of a boy, in a sitting attitude, one holding a spade, and the other,

* Shakspeare's personal arms only.

whose eyes are closed, bearing with the left hand an inverted torch, and resting the right upon a chapless skull. The effigy of Shakspeare was originally coloured to resemble life, and its appearance, before touched by innovation, is thus described. "The eyes were of a light hazel, and the hair and beard auburn. The dress consisted of a scarlet doublet, over which was a loose black gown, without sleeves. The lower part of the cushion before him was of a crimson colour, and the upper part green, with gilt tassels." In the year 1748 this monument was carefully repaired, and the original colours preserved as nearly as possible. Mr. John Ward, (grandfather to the late Mrs. Siddons,) manager of a company of comedians, gave the receipts arising from the representation of Othello, (Sep. 9, 1746,) to defray the expenses thus incurred: this was a laudable act: but in 1793 the bust and figure above, together with the figure of Mr. Combe, near it, were, at the request of Mr. Malone, re-painted with white lead. This instance of bad taste was thus satirized in a book kept in the chancel:—

"Stranger, to whom this monument is shewn,
Invoke the poet's curse upon Malone,
Whose meddling zeal his barbarous taste betrays,
And daubs his tomb-stone as he mars his plays."

Beneath the bust are the following inscriptions:—

JVDICIO PYLIVM, GENIO SOCRATEM, ARTE MARONEM,
TERRA TEGIT, POPVLVS MÆRET, OLYMPVS HABET.

STAY, PASSENGER; WHY GOEST THOU BY SO FAST?
 READ, IF THOU CANST, WHOM ENVIOUS DEATH HATH PLAST
 WITHIN THIS MONUMENT: SHAKSPEARE, WITH WHOME
 QUICKE NATVRE DIDE; WHOSE NAME DOTH DECK YS. TOMBE
 FAR MORE THEN COST; SITH ALL YT. HE HATH WRITT
 LEAVES LIVING ART BYT PAGE TO SERVE HIS WITT.

Obit. Ano. Doi. 1616.

Ætatis 53. Die 23. Ap.

The monument was executed by Gerrard Johnson, a foreigner, and was approved, on the score of resemblance, by those relatives familiar with Shakspeare's person, under whose direction it was erected: In the opinion of one of the most distinguished sculptors of the age, the bust has the character of being a resemblance of Shakspeare, but executed by an unskilful artist.

It is remarkable there are no monumental inscriptions to other persons of the name of Shakspeare except the poet's wife, who died on the 6th of August, 1623, at the age of 67 years. Her remains lie between the north wall of the chancel and the grave of her husband. On a brass plate, inserted in the stone over her grave, is an account of her age and the time of her decease, with some pious latin verses, probably written by her son-in-law Dr. Hall. Two other flat stones near the grave of Shakspeare denote the spot in which were interred the bodies of Susanna, his beloved daughter, and her husband, John Hall. Part of the epitaph to Susanna was wantonly obliterated nearly a century ago, but has been carefully restored by a Committee of the Shakspearean Club, in 1834.

On the north side of the east window is the monument of John Combe, Esq., (executed also by Gerrard Johnson,) who died on the 10th of July 1614. John Combe resided at Welcombe, and is said to have been the personal friend of Shakspeare.

ANNE HATHAWAY'S COTTAGE.

Crossing the fields to the west of Stratford, by a well-frequented footpath, a pleasant walk of a mile brings us to the little hamlet of Shottery. Rural and secluded it once was, with its green lane, picturesque, timber-ribbed, thatched cottages, babbling rush-fringed brook, and wooden bridge. A recent new house and abominable *row*, in modern utilitarian style, have somewhat disfigured it, and the old timber bridge is exchanged for a worse—that is, artistically. But the scene of the youthful Shakspeare's love-suit, and the residence of the rustic beauty, Anne Hathaway, whose wiles ensnared him, still remain—altered, of course, in some degree. The house is of timber and brick, in two storeys, with thatched roof, and appears like two joined together, the lowest division being the longest. It is built upon a foundation of squared slabs of *lias* shale, and is now subdivided into three tenements. Raised above the surrounding level, and having in the front a rudely-paved terrace, to which there is an ascent

by steps, it must originally have been a good farm house, fit for the residence of a substantial yeoman of the olden time.

On looking up at the central chimney, the letters I. H., and date 1697, stand unpleasantly prominent; but only record the reparation of the house and chimney by John Hathaway, at that date.

Within the dwelling, divided as it is, the old kitchen yet shows traces of the "good old times" in its rude stone floor, low ceiling, heavy beams, and portions of the oaken wainscot with which its rough plastering was formerly covered. Then there is the wide fire-place, with its cozy chimney corners and supporting beams, where the wood fires must have often crackled and blazed on the ample hearth. On the opposite side of the passage is the parlour, also ceiled with strong beams of timber, and a huge fire-place, with recesses on either side. Initials of the Hathaways, who long continued to reside here, appear on the bacon cupboard, on the left of the fire-place, and on an old table; but they are of a later period than Shakspeare's visitations. In the room above the parlour, an old carved bedstead, of the Elizabethan period, is still shown, handed down as a heir loom with the house, it is stated; and this may probably be the case. There is also an old chest, with some home-spun linen preserved in it, marked E. H.

VICTORIA SPA.

An elegant Pump Room has been erected at the Springs, which are about a mile from the town. There is also an Hotel for the reception of Visitors to whom the distance of the Wells from the Town would prove fatiguing.

Stratford enjoys one very strong recommendation for many Invalids in its comparative tranquillity when compared with Cheltenham or Leamington, and in the opportunity thus afforded to render quietness, country air, and early hours, auxiliary to the beneficial effects of the mineral waters.

In consequence of an application from the Proprietors, H. R. H. The Duchess of Kent was graciously pleased to permit the Spa to be named "The Victoria Spa," in honour of her illustrious daughter, on the day of whose coming of age (May 24, 1837,) the Pump-room and Baths were opened by a public breakfast and other entertainments.

The Stratford Waters possess most valuable qualities, and may be drunk or used for bathing in all cases to which a course of mild saline water is adapted. The state of dilution in which the salts they contain occur renders them fit for long-continued use, especially in chronic disorders affecting the organs of digestion, the result of exposure to hot climates, or of too great indulgence in the pleasures of the table, or arising from any other causes. As compared with other known saline springs the Stratford water most nearly resembles those of Cheltenham.

CHARLECOTE.

Charlecote Park is about three miles from Stratford, beautifully situated upon the green banks of the quiet musing Avon, and at present embosomed in gigantic elms whose leafy canopies surround it on all sides. So thickly placed are these lofty wooded citizens that the old Elizabethan mansion with its turrets, gables, balustrades, and chimneys, is scarcely to be seen from between the foliage unless the house is approached very near.

Charlecote has always been traditionally connected with an early exploit of Shakspeare's, the truth or falsehood of which has engaged the attempts of many writers to elucidate. We accept the tradition, and think it highly probable that Shakspeare in his younger days may have been passionately fond of field sports, and indulged in them clandestinely. Probably an exploit of the kind was then considered no more of than is thought now of a sportsman shooting a hare on a manor where he is on trespass.

Charlecote House was built by Thomas Lucy, Esq., in 1558, only six years before Shakspeare was born, and he was Sheriff of Warwickshire in 1578. He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth, at a later period, in 1593. Mr. Knight, in his Biography of Shakspeare, has attempted to prove the improbability of the deer-stealing tradition, and asks whether it is likely that Sir Thomas Lucy would have pursued the son of an alderman of Stratford with extraordinary severity? We think it likely enough, and that the account given by

Rowe, as far as can now be made out, shadows forth the true facts of the case.—“Upon his (Shakspeare's) leaving school, he seems to have given entirely into that way of living which his father proposed to him; and in order to settle in the world after a family manner, he thought fit to marry while he was yet very young. His wife was the daughter of one Hathaway, said to have been a substantial yeoman in the neighbourhood of Stratford. In this kind of settlement he continued for some time, till an extravagance that he was guilty of, forced him both out of his county and that way of living which he had taken up; and, though it seemed at first to be a blemish upon his good manners, and a misfortune to him, yet it afterwards happily proved the occasion of exerting one of the greatest geniuses that ever was known in dramatic poetry. He had, by a misfortune common enough to young fellows, fallen into ill company, and amongst them some that made a frequent practice of deer stealing, engaged him more than once in robbing a park that belonged to Sir Thomas Lucy, of Charlecote, near Stratford. For this he was prosecuted by that gentleman, as he thought somewhat too severely; and in order to revenge that ill usage, he made a ballad upon him. And though this, probably the first essay of his poetry, be lost, yet it is said to have been so very bitter that it redoubled the prosecution against him to that degree that he was obliged to leave his business and family in Warwickshire for some time, and shelter himself in London.”

The walk from Stratford to Charlecote is very

pleasing, especially if the side of the Avon be taken by Hatton Rock, as picturesque a part of the river as any about Stratford. Here all is serenity and repose—the river sleeps, lulled by the “waving sedges,” hoar willows sentinel the banks, and the wooded glacis rapidly sinking to the stream, wild with brush-wood, lofty wild flowers, and drooping brambles, “call home ancient thoughts from banishment,” and invest our ideas with the simplicity of scenes fresh with childhood. Shakspeare has been *here*, and we catch the thoughts and similies before embodied by him, and but for him should we now be wandering? *His* enchanter’s wand has consecrated all this river and woodland scenery, the soft-flowing Avon, and glades of Charlecote.

Sauntering through the park among the lofty elms, beeches, and limes, the scene is involuntarily in shadow consonant with the feelings likely to arise, save where on the velvet turf the opening glades exhibit the numerous deer with their branching horns, which we can by no means dispense with, leading us to the images of the witty poet, and his mention of the “hairy fools.” Yet changes have occurred even here, we look for trees we could certainly identify with the Elizabethan age, and find but few—some there are, and perhaps the old hawthorns divided down to their roots in many boles are really as old as the time of Shakspeare’s excursions hither. They inspire recollections of that “hawthorn shade,” so old English in itself, to which he often refers.

The old church of Charlecote has recently been taken down, and another in the pointed style is in the

course of erection. Thus change progresses, and it becomes increasingly difficult for imagination to supply the images of the past. The old mansion has even been altered and added to, but may its characteristic features long remain.

THE JUBILEE.

In 1769 a Jubilee, or Festival, was held here in honour of Shakspeare, instituted by the celebrated Garrick. It commenced on the morning of Wednesday, September 6, 1769, and terminated with the evening of the following Friday. An octagonal amphitheatre was erected on the Bancroft, by the river Avon, which was capable of holding more than a thousand persons, the interior of which was fitted up with great taste. Amongst other ornaments was the statue of Shakspeare, presented to the Corporation by Garrick, which now occupies a niche of the Town Hall. The amusements consisted of a public breakfast at the Town Hall; the performance of the Oratorio of Judith, in the church of Stratford; a public ordinary was provided at the amphitheatre, to which between seven and eight hundred persons sat down. There was also an assembly, a masquerade, an exhibition of fireworks, a horse race, an illumination, cannon were fired, and bands of music paraded the streets. The concourse of persons of rank to assist in this poetical festival was so great that many were not able to procure beds in the town, and are said to have been compelled to sleep in their carriages.

For a full account of this Festival the reader is referred to Mr. Wheler's History of Stratford. The Shakspearean Club, consisting chiefly of the inhabitants of Stratford, have instituted an annual Festival on the 23rd of April, the Poet's birth-day, which is always attended by numerous visitors. A dramatic procession, a masquerade, a ball, &c., sometimes takes place at these anniversaries. The first procession, after the manner of the one conducted by Garrick, was in 1827, under the patronage of His Majesty George IV. This was repeated in 1830, with increased splendour.

It is not intended in this little work to do more than enumerate the principal objects deserving of the visitor's attention at Stratford-upon-Avon : his imagination will supply the rest. When it is recollected that Shakspeare's infancy and boyhood were passed at Stratford ; that he was married there, (or, as some think, at Luddington, two miles lower down, on the right bank of the river,) and that the object of his choice resided before her marriage at Shottery, only one mile distant ; when it is remembered that his children were christened and married at Stratford, and that he passed a part of each year, and the whole of the last three years of his life in the town, and died and was buried there ; that he is known, moreover, to have been on friendly terms with the inhabitants of most of the principal houses then existing in the neighbourhood, as Welcombe, Clifford Chambers, Ed-

stone, &c. ;—every street, every field, every walk and ride about Stratford, becomes hallowed by such associations. The readers of his sonnets may please themselves with imagining that they can find allusions to circumstances which may have passed in these very scenes ; but the general impression will still be, on surveying this beautiful but not striking vicinity, that he who drew such images as abound in the works of Shakspeare, from the plains of Warwickshire, aided only by an imperfect education, and during a youth oppressed with family difficulties, must have been endowed with a mind immeasurably superior to that of ordinary men ; for such is the greatness of his works, that mankind only now begin to appreciate them, and as intellectual improvement advances, their value will evidently become more and more generally admitted.

To visit a place where so gifted a being is known to have lived, not in his youth only, but in the maturity of his genius, is to experience the most elevated kind of pleasure. Whilst we speak of Shakspeare, and contemplate the place of his birth and death, the thoughts are lifted towards the great Creator of all intellect, by whose permission alone Shakspeare lived, and whose power could plant such a prodigy wherever it seemed to Him to be fit for the inscrutable purposes of his creation.

To feel the full influence of a locality enriched with such recollections, and suggesting such reflections, the visitor should pass some days in exploring the immediate neighbourhood. A walk to the cottage at Shottery ; to Charlecote Park ; or to the beautiful heights

of Welcombe, where his friend Combe dwelt; or across the hill below the church, which commands so exquisite a view of the town and river, and which leads towards Clifford; might be recommended to every tourist. These walks will ever derive their principal attraction for the thoughtful visitor from the conviction that they may each have been trodden by the feet of Shakspeare; that his eye must have rested on every hill and valley; that every turn of the classic river; every common flower that here takes root, was familiar to him; that he beheld the venerable church as it now is, and in it joined in the public services of religion; and that he contemplated all these objects in youth, when the divine fire was only yet struggling in his bosom, and again in after life, when his apprehension of all that he beheld may be said without exaggeration to have been more than mortal.

Almost all that is known of his actual life is comprehended within the objects surveyed at Stratford. His father's house; the garden of his own house, still but little encroached upon; and the church which contains his grave;—these are all that tradition can point to. But his works amply fill up the deficiency, not indeed with ordinary details, but with the fruits of twenty years of labour, surpassing all that the world had ever before seen, if not destined to be matchless in all time.





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